

# AUDIOENZ

New Zealand's hi-fi magazine

## Image Revelation

**A magnificent speaker and exceptional value**

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### **Image Revelation loudspeaker. \$4999**

Image's Revelation loudspeaker is well named. It is the best speaker that Image's Chris Ball has produced, reveals vast quantities of information from discs and is a revelation about just how much speaker performance can be purchased for five grand.

Chris Ball has been building loudspeakers for a living for nearly three decades, with some 15 years under the [Image Loudspeakers](#) banner. It's no secret that Image has won a number of friends among New Zealand hi-fi buyers, with the [414](#) and [414mk2](#) models being particularly popular.

### **Building a Revelation**

The Revelation is a large floorstanding model, standing just over one metre tall. The 220mm width is just enough to hold the twin woofers, while the 370mm depth provides a lot of enclosure space.

The drivers used in the Revelation come from all over the world. Morel's Supreme 110 tweeter comes from Israel and is a very expensive tweeter – far more expensive than would normally be found in a speaker of the Revelation's price. The tweeter has a diameter of 28mm.

The Norwegian company of SEAS produces the 170mm midrange cone. The 210mm bass driver, used in pairs, is from the Danish company Peerless.

### **Viva la Revelation!**

I had the Revelations in my lounge for some four weeks. During that time I had the pleasure of hosting two contingents of the *AudioEnz* Listening Panel – an ad hoc group of [AudioEnz Forum](#) members



who come by to drink my beer and inflict their bad musical taste on me. In exchange I receive several more “ears” and many opinions for consideration. The main system was my Meridian 508.20 CD player, old (but very good!) Thorens TD-150mk2/Rega RB300/ATOC9 and Plinius 8150 amplifier.

The first aspect to strike me when listening to the Revelations was an extraordinary wealth of detail that comes through this speaker. It’s not “forced” or forward detail, as I hear with many speakers – like a child shouting “look at me!” Instead this is detail with a natural ease and ability to communicate.

The expensive tweeter did its job, which means that I really didn’t notice it. The higher frequencies were audibly extended. Clean, clear and wonderful.

“Our desired bass response was more to do with accuracy, dynamics and detail than extension,” says Chris Ball about the Revelation. The bass from the Revelation is extraordinary. You would never guess that you were listening to a large ported box speaker, as the speaker has a clarity and agility in the bass, combined with a sense of weight and power, that’s hard to find in any speaker.

On orchestral music there was an “almost visceral feel”, to quote one of the listening panel. The combination of subtlety and power in the lower regions underpinned the orchestra – and any other music we played. Even on that god-awful racket known as modern dance music, the Revelations weren’t challenged by any change of pace or intensity. They could also play this music at neighbourhood-annoying levels.

One of the *AudioEnz* Listening Panel is a fan of large scale classical music and, rather conveniently, an owner of the Image 414mk2 speakers. He confirmed my thoughts that the Revelation is a big leap ahead of the performance of the best-selling [Image 414](#). Large scale classical music really illustrated the strengths of the Revelation. The speakers went from very soft to very loud without strain, plus – and this is rarer than you might have imagined – without any change in character of the speaker.

Imaging was very solid, stable and convincing. Imaging freaks will hear a touch more precision from mini-monitors, as always, but the Revelations reproduced a huge, firm and continuous soundstage.

Negatives? Only one that comes to mind. If you’re used to the sound from electrostatics, such as the lovely sounding Quad 988s that former *AudioEnz* writer Charles Thomson played for me in Soundline Wellington, then you might hear a trace of the box in the Revelations. But it is a very subtle problem.

## **So you say you want a Revelation?**

The Image Revelation is priced at the top end of the “real world” loudspeaker market. Five thousand is a lot of money, but it is an amount that some can stretch to if the performance is there. And with the Revelation it is. You would be hard pressed to find a speaker at up to double the price that performs better than this loudspeaker.

When I review a speaker I’m normally quite happy to go back to my [Epos ES14s](#) once the review samples have been packed up. This time I was fending off Image’s Chris Ball with the broom in order to keep the Revelations in my home for another few days. I loved listening to music through the Revelations.

The Image Revelations are the real deal. They are a magnificent loudspeaker and exceptional value. Buy them.

For your [nearest Image dealer](#)

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